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L E T T E R

F R O M

A Frenchman at PARIS,

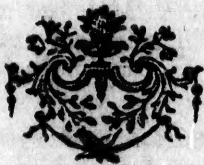
T O

His Countryman at the HAGUE;

O N

The present Dispute between FRANCE and
G R E A T B R I T A I N .

Translated from the F R E N C H .



L O N D O N :

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THE LETTER

FROM

A Frenchman at PARIS

TO

His Countryman at the HAGUE

ON

The present Dispute between France and
Great Britain.

Translated from the FRENCH



LONDON:

Printed for S. BARNES, at the Press No. 10

St. Paul's Church-Yard.

1804.

A

LETTER, &c.

My dear FRIEND,

IN what calamities are our ambitious, enterprising ministers going to involve us? That lust of extending the dominion of our Grand Monarch, by means right or wrong, will I fear at last prove the utter ruin of the *Gallic* empire. Our foreign trade is in effect already ruined; and, if our attempts should happen to be attended with ill success (and for my part I can see no hopes of better), the consequence must be, that this nation will be more humbled and disgraced than it was in the war to which the peace of *Utrecht* put an end in the year 1713.

We have always been sufferers by our wars with the *English*: and though in the last we came off conquerors on the continent, yet by the terrible losses we sustained in our shipping at sea for the last two years, it was visible to the whole *French* nation, that if hostilities had been wholly confined to that element, or continued on it but a year or two longer, our naval force must have

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been

been ruined perhaps beyond repair. And pray what better have we to expect, in case our ministers should be so *presumptuous*, and tempt the wrath of Heaven so far, as in earnest to enter into a war with *Great Britain*; at a time when she is so vastly superior to us in her naval squadrons, as well as strongly fortified by the forces which our ministers have given them time to raise at home, and her strong alliances formed abroad?

After reading so many pamphlets, wherein, as you say, the *English* have been made aggressors, and the cause of *France* hath been defended as the most just and upright, you will doubtless wonder what can induce me to tax our ministers with *presumption*, and *tempting the wrath of Heaven*. These words, you will say, call for an explanation; and methinks I see you in the condition of a man impatiently expecting one. Alas! my friend, I fear the remedy will appear worse to you than the disease: in removing one pain from your mind, I apprehend that I shall only infuse into it another, which must give you real torment. I must tell you then, that you have been egregiously imposed on by those pamphlets, which are in themselves utterly false, and were written by the hirelings of our court, with no other view, but to spirit up our people to support their measures, and prejudice the neighbouring nations against the *English*, particularly the *German* princes, by a false representation of facts. Our ministers hoped, by that artifice, either to draw them into alliances with *France*, or at least prevent them from entering into any with *Great Britain*. But how unhappily have they miscarried in their design? Their attempt has had a contrary effect. The

British

British ministers have been too many for ours this time in forecast. They anticipated them in all their designs, and even in their application to foreign courts, whom they had prepossessed with the justice of their pretensions, and to whom they had represented the proceedings of our ministers in a very unfavourable light, long before they offered their *partial* and *mutilated* memorials to their perusal, which have only served to confirm the accusations of the *British* court.

If I appear to be an advocate for the *English*, or to speak in their behalf, you may already see the grounds for it. I am persuaded our ministers have been acting a very unjust part by them; and as Heaven will never favour the cause of injustice, neither ought any good Catholic to approve of it. Besides, I think I already see the hand of God visibly stretched out to oppose and blast the designs of our politicians, by the disappointments and crosses which hitherto they have met with in all their proceedings. But to return to my subject:

By *partial* and *mutilated* memorials, I mean the edition of them printed in 1754 at the *Louvre*. These you imagine perhaps contain all which passed between the ministers of both nations during their negotiation; but in this you are greatly mistaken. I here was another memorial delivered in, by way of *Reply* to that of our ministers, which hath been omitted in their edition, for the reasons mentioned in the history which follows of those transactions. It is on this account that I give the epithets of *partial* and *mutilated* to the *Louvre* impression: and as it is solely from the last

French memorial contained in the said edition, that those pamphlets, published in favour of the *French* system, have drawn all their authorities, you may easily judge whether they can be tracts likely to give a just and true representation of facts. If they were, is it to be imagined the *Reply* would be suppressed by our ministers? For what end can you conceive it to be kept out of your sight, but to conceal from you the state of things, represented in a light extremely different from that in which they appear in the memorial published by ours?

As to the *Summary Discussion*, which you seem to place such entire dependance on, it is no more than an abridgment of that memorial; and the *Dutch observator*, (which you have an opinion of), only the eccho to, or comment on, the *Summary Discussion*. So that, from what has been said, you may reasonably conclude, what is really the case, that you are not to expect from them a true state of the affair, or indeed the truth of any fact which does not favour the interest of our nation. Those pamphlets, in short, are written to *impose* and *mislead*, not to declare the truth, or inform you. They are published under the direction of our ministers, to support their system concerning the ancient limits of *Acadie*, and to ruin the credit of the *English* in foreign courts; by representing them in as bad a light as they are able to paint them, no matter whether the colours be true or false.

Those authors know they cannot well deceive men of understanding, and disinterested: their chief design is on the weak and credulous, who are generally

nerally captivated by the first report of things, and seldom quit their prejudices.

But, after all, this is a mistaken notion: for such are not the persons who are able to promote their cause; nor are such writings fit to influence the men of weight and good sense either at home or abroad. I can assure you, here they have a very different conception of things from what you entertain at the *Hague*. They were dubious of the system of our ministers all along; but, since they have seen their memorials, they are convinced that it is a downright *fraud*, a bare-faced imposition. They are ashamed to see a cause, which they have hitherto cried up as the most clear and evident, should owe all its support to misrepresenting and suppressing facts, wrong quotations, and endless chicaneries. They wonder how they could venture to present such a compound of falsehood and absurdities to ministers of foreign courts; who must be offended no less at the low opinion it discovers ours to have of their capacities, as the imposition designed on their reason and discernment,

You may judge what opinion they entertain of the *Summary Discussion*. The publication of this piece, they say, is a very impolitic step of our ministers, as it puts it in the power of all people of the most moderate capacities every where to discover their artifices and false glosses; which might have been concealed from them by being confined to the voluminous memorials themselves, to which very few would ever be able to have recourse. So that they conclude they have, by that means, brought their system into a more
general

general discredit, and weakened their interest by the loss of such a considerable, as well as interesting party of men, who otherwise, in all probability, might have been prejudiced in their favour no less than the rest.

However that be, this is certain, that the middle class of people, as well as great numbers of the nobility, are greatly dissatisfied with the conduct of our ministers on this occasion; and think it very hard that the nation should be forced into a most expensive, as well as hazardous war, to support an unjust and chymical system of their own framing: the imposition of which they have exposed to the world themselves, by assigning *Acadie* one sort of antient limits one year, and another very different sort the next.

By such conduct the nation's credit must be ruined to such a degree that all foreign powers will be afraid to trust us; and scorn to enter into an alliance with a nation which has been capable of acting such an unjust, and indeed perfidious part, in direct violation of the most solemn treaties. Already we experience the effects of their pernicious measures, in finding ourselves unable to gain one considerable state either to join us or declare themselves neuters; while some of the prime powers of *Europe* have made no scruple to enter into an alliance with the *English*. Must not this arise from their being thoroughly convinced of the justice of their cause? Is it to be imagined that they would have leagued with them had they found them proceeding on dishonest principles, and aiming to defraud our Monarch of his just rights?

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I shall drop the further pursuit of this subject here, because I shall have an occasion to say more upon it hereafter, and return to the court writers, whom I represented as set to work, not to inform, but mislead the public. You would clearly perceive this, were you critically to examine those pieces, or to read the memorials themselves, especially, accompanied with the *Reply* of the *English* commissaries, which has detected a great deal of very unfair dealing on our side; and was for that reason suppressed by our ministers in the above-mentioned edition printed at the *Louvre*. This *Reply* has opened the eyes of great numbers of people here, as well as in other countries, who before saw a good deal of reason to be dissatisfied with those memorials: which, being spun out to a very voluminous bulk, and introducing several matters which seem not pertinent to the subject, were considered as compiled rather to perplex the cause, and smother the truth, than to bring it to light. For the whole matter in dispute turns on the single question, *What are the antient limits of Acadie, ceded by France in the treaty of Utrecht?* A point which people of judgment conceive might have been thoroughly discussed in a very few sheets of paper.

The suspicion arising from this circumstance made the curious more inquisitive into the case; and, by tracing things from one hand to another, the connoisseurs pretend to have discovered the original spring of our ministers system. They do not scruple to declare, among their friends and acquaintances whom they can trust, that it is a contrivance set on foot by those in power, soon after the treaty of *Utrecht*, in order to get back,
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by address, from the *English*, the country of *Acadié*; which, to procure a peace in 1713, *Lewis XIV.* was, in a manner, compelled against his will to cede to them.

It is well known with what reluctance that prince parted with *all Acadié* to the Queen of *Great Britain*; and how much he laboured to induce her to restore it, in lieu of a very tempting equivalent, or rather more than equivalent: which, however, had no influence on her; she being inflexibly resolved to have the right of possession yielded up. But, although *Lewis le Grand* was so desirous to have recovered *Acadié*, which, in 1710, had been taken by the *English*, in the reduction of *Port Royal*; yet it does not appear that he ever had the least design of getting it again out of the hands of that nation by unfair or conclusive means: nor does fame offer to sully his glorious memory, by the imputation of so atrocious a design.

This scheme to dupe the *English* out of *Acadié*, is said to have been laid by the ministers who were in place in the beginning of the regency of the Duke of *Orleans*. The first thing to be done, was to settle a plan to proceed upon. This was a difficult matter, as they found the clause of cession so strongly worded, and drawn up with so much precaution, that they could not find out any flaw or mistake on which to ground a pretext for disputing the *English* title to the whole, or even to a part; inasmuch as *France* cedes *the whole of Nova Scotia, or Acadié*, without exception: which plainly implied, that, by the treaty, the *English* were entitled to *all* the country which

at any time before had gone under either of these two names. They had, besides, formally taken possession of it in *August* 1714, in presence of the *French* commissaries sent by the governor of *Lewisbourg* in *Ile-Royal*, (or *Cape-Breton*), to carry that part of the treaty into execution.

However, as the country was ceded according to its *antient* limits, and these limits were not expressly specified in the treaty, as me-thinks they ought to have been; they resolved to take advantage of these words, and insist that the *English* were far from being intitled to all *Nova-Scotia* or *Acadié*: under pretence that they were intitled, by the treaty, to no more of the country in question than what was contained within the *antient* limits of *Acadié*; and that those *antient* limits were much more contracted than the modern.

This objection to the *English* pretensions was started in 1719, by our commissaries who were appointed to settle the boundaries between *Canada* and the province of *Hudson's Bay*; but as our ministers had not yet determined what limits were to be given to their *antient Acadié*, nothing farther passed at that time on the occasion. However, soon after, they seem to have come to some sort of determination in the matter, since the *Sieur William de l'Isle*, who, in his maps, published before the treaty of *Utrecht*, extended the bounds of *Acadié* considerably beyond the peninsula; in that of all *America*, set forth in 1723, restrains them to somewhat less than the peninsula: which he is supposed to have done by direction of the ministers at that time in place.

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Thus things stood, without any application made on our side to the *English*, about settling the limits of this country, till the year 1740 or 1744; when father *Charlevoix*, the Jesuit, in his *History of New France*, undertook to treat of the *antient* limits of *Acadié*. In doing this, it seems, he is charged with misquoting passages of authors, and misrepresenting facts; for which he has been severely handled by a late *English* writer. He affirms, "That, in the opinion of all the historians and geographers, excepting *Champlain* and *Denys*, *Acadié* includes the whole peninsula." And, although, among the limits which he has collected from authors, he does not take upon him to determine which are the *antient* limits, nor to set up his own opinion against that of so many other learned men; yet, he found a flaw in wording the treaty of *Utrecht*, which, in his judgment, reduced *Acadié* to less than the peninsula; since, by the cession of *Acadié*, and also *Port-Royal*, it appeared as if *Port-Royal* did not belong to it. At length, the treaty of *Aix la Chapelle* having restored peace to *Europe*, our ministers, after so many years deferring the negociation, resolved to set it on foot; and having first on a plan of limits, in 1749 sent over the *Sieur Durand* to the *English* Ministers with a memorial; wherein the circumference of the whole peninsula was assigned to be the *antient* limits of *Acadié*, and that upon the authority of all the historians and maps of all nations.

Here then, at last, the *antient* limits of *Acadié* seemed to be fixed by our ministers; and it would have been well if they had adhered to that determination: for then, although they should not

have been able to make good their system; yet, they might have avoided the dishonourable imputation, which is now fastened upon them, of having contrived that scheme on purpose to gain their point, and defraud the *English* of their right.

But there is a fatality attending all frauds and impositions of this kind, which generally infatuates the contrivers, and renders their designs liable to a detection, whereof the present case affords a remarkable instance: for next year, when the *English* commissaries came to *Paris* to discuss this affair of the limits, our commissaries assigned for the *antient* limits of *Acadie*, the coast of the peninsula, from *Cape St. Mary*, round by *Cape Sable* to *Canséau*.

The *English* commissaries surprized, as well they might, at this alteration (about a point which they conceived ought to be invariable, and which they imagined was well known to them) demanded the reason for it; and insisted "that the *French* ministers ought to adhere to the limits which had been fixed by them the year before, and described by the *Sieur Durand*: alledging, that they could not, at pleasure, recede from the limits they had once proposed, and substitute others in their stead: that this shewed that they in reality did not know themselves what the *antient* limits were; and gave a suspicion that their distinction about *antient* limits, was only a contrivance of theirs, to impose on the *English*, and get back again by fraud what they had before given up to them by treaty."

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To this, it seems, they made a very odd answer, alledging, "That the *Sieur Durand* was not sent over to settle the limits; and had been "deceived in his notions about the *antient* limits "of *Acadié*, by depending on the *English* maps "and other bad authorities." Thus throwing the blame of the ministers on *Mr. Durand*. But this is looked on here as a poor shift, and which indeed is not at all probable: for how can it be supposed that gentleman drew up his memorial out of his own head; or would venture to prescribe any bounds to *Acadié* without their express directions?

Far from it; we are told, that before *Mr. Durand* was sent over to *London* the ministers had several conferences for chusing a plan of limits out of those mentioned by *Father Charlevoix*; about which they were much divided.

Some were for allowing the *English* the whole peninsula of *Acadié*: because they thought they could not allow them less, as *Acadié*, in the opinion of all the best historians, comprised so much; and that the more they allowed the complainants, the more ready they would be to comply with their terms.

Others were for reducing the bounds of *Acadié*, to the coast from *Cape St. Mary* to *Canseau*, according to the description of *Denys*: alledging that the express testimony of a person who had been so long in the country itself, and might therefore be supposed to know the bounds of it, would be of more weight, in fixing the point, than the declaration of historians and geographers,

phers who never had been on the spot. They added also, that they had for it only the assertion of Pere *Charlevoix*, who, as it appeared, was very apt to commit mistakes, and cited none of those authors excepting one.

A third party were for restraining the bounds of *Acadié* to those, ascribed by the same father to *Champlain*, from *Cape Sable* to *Canseau*. They assigned for a reason, that since they were for reducing the limits with which *Acadié* was ceded by the treaty of *Utrecht*, they might as well reduce them to that extent as any other; and it might be presumed, that if the *English* would comply to accept of the first reduction, they would not go to war rather than accept of the second. They added, that if the circumstance, of *Denys* having been in *Acadié*, gave more authority to the limits assigned by him than those assigned by the historians, there was much stronger evidence to support the limits ascribed to *Champlain*, as this person went with the first discoverer to *Acadié*, where he resided three years at *St. Croix* and *Port-Royal*; and consequently was better able to give an account of its *antient* bounds than *Denys*, who did not go thither till 30 or 40 years after.

All agreed that the bounds supposed to be described by *Champlain*, were supported on much better authority, as being more antient than those of *Denys*; which therefore were unanimously rejected. But then it was alledged by one of the ministers, "that, on examining the passage in question, it would appear that the reverend father had greatly mistaken the sense of that author, and quoted him wrong." This threw them into a new perplexity, and occasioned farther

ther debates; in which some were still for grounding their scheme on that passage ascribed to *Champlain*, notwithstanding the objection. They alledged, that although the passage referred to in *Champlain* might differ from that of father *Charlevoix*; yet, as by a little *straining* it might be made to bear the same sense, it ought to be pitched on, for the reasons before mentioned. Others, on the contrary, declared, that the passages were so different, that it would be impossible to make one pass for the other; and that, by attempting it, they would both explode their design, and bring reflexions on the *well-meaning* Jesuit: who might, they said, have misquoted his author *purposely*, with a view to serve the interests of his prince.

Hereupon one or two ministers, less zealous in the affair than the rest, took occasion from this disagreement of sentiments, to advise them to drop their scheme, and let their neighbours enjoy the right which they had to the whole of *Acadie* in its largest sense by the treaty of *Utrecht*; telling them, “that they were mistaken, if they imagined the *English*, from their past indolence, “ would suffer so great an imposition on them; “ that it was a dangerous experiment; and that, “ if they did not make out extremely clear what “ they undertook to prove, they would by their “ attempt only bring disgrace on themselves and “ the nation.”

This advice, however, pass for nothing with the other ministers, who were determined at all events to proceed: and accordingly, after a good deal of debate, the first opinion concerning the *ancient* limits was adopted; and a memorial being drawn
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up on that foot, Mr. *Durand* was sent over with it to *England*, as hath been before related.

However, our politicians having reconsidered the objections which had been made to their plan of limits ; and being convinced that it was not so defensible as they could have wished it : to make sure of their point, thought proper to send orders to the governor of *Canada* to build one or more forts, if requisite, at *Beau-Bassin*, and on the isthmus of *Chignecto* ; thereby to confine the *English* to the peninsula, and hinder them from entering on the continent-part of *Acadie*, which they claimed in virtue of the treaty of *Utrecht*, explained by their new-coined system of *ancient* limits.

It was not till after the *Sieur Durand* was dispatched for *England*, that they begun to look for authorities to support their system ; in which search they discovered those passages in *Champlain* so expressly contrary to it. This gave them great perplexity ; and the rather as they saw it would lay them under a necessity of altering their limits, and fixing on either those ascribed by *Charlevoix* to *Champlain* himself, or else those described by *Denys*, which they had before rejected : for they perceived that the authority of historians would be of no weight against that of a traveller who had been in the country ; and that it was necessary to oppose the authority of one traveller to that of another.

Most of them were inclined to pitch on the limits ascribed to *Champlain*, as he was much the earlier traveller of the two, had surveyed all the coast from the mouth of the river *St. Laurence* to *Cape Cod*
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in *New England*, and had been above twenty years governor of *Canada*. But it was objected, that if they made use of the bounds ascribed to him by *Charlevoix*, and the *English* should discover those passages before mentioned; they would overthrow this passage, which is indeterminate, by opposing to it that in which he expressly declares the river *St. Laurence* to be its northern boundary. They were likewise put in mind of what had been observed in a former council: that, comparing the passage which mentioned the limits, and on which they proposed to ground their new system, with the original, it appeared that father *Charlevoix* had committed some mistake in citing it. For these reasons the systematic ministers thought it would be better to adopt the limits described by *Denys*; and the rather as they would be strongly supported by the argument drawn by *Charlevoix* from the words of the treaty of *Utrecht*, which cedes *Acadié*, and also *Port Royal*, as if this place was out of *Acadié*: an argument which they had overlooked in settling their first system.

This seemed to be a lucky discovery, and revived their hopes. However, it was objected by those on the other side, that they ought not to rely much on that kind of proof; which, supposing it of any solidity, would be overthrown by another passage of *Champlain*, which expressly declares *Port-Royal* to be in *Acadié*. To obviate this objection, the advocates for *Denys* went so far as to affirm, there was no danger that the passages of *Champlain*, which they should suppress in their memorial, "would ever appear against them; since the *English*, they said, were too indolent ever to give themselves the trouble
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“ to make a search strict enough to discover passages which lie so much out of the way as those in question.”

The two ministers who were against the imposition in general, irritated at their rashness, to risk the credit of the nation on a chance which seemed to have a thousand to one against them; advised them once more to leave the *English* in full possession of their rights, and abandon their system; “ which, they said, was feeble enough before, but could not possibly stand on the foot of the intended alteration: as it plainly evinced that they did not know what the antient bounds of *Acadie* were when they drew up *Durand's* memorial, and consequently that the whole was a contrivance formed by them to overreach and defraud the *English*.” They added, “ That the first system of limits required much more substantial proofs to support it than they were in possession of: but that, as for this new-fangled one, whose contradiction of the other could admit of no sort of defence, the least flaw or defect found in it would bring it to the ground at once with disgrace; not only to the present forgers of it, but to all the ministers who had been in the management of affairs since the treaty of *Utrecht*, as it was known to have been so long in agitation at the court of *France*.” To this the rest replied, that they were resolved to venture it; and the rather as they had provided against all events, by ordering forts to be built on the isthmus of *Cheignisset*.

This instance furnished the dissenting ministers with a new argument against the new system;

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" as those forts, they said, would be a standing
 " witness against them, so long as they conti-
 " nued in being, that the first system was not of
 " *Durand's*, but of their own framing; and
 " consequently, that both the one and the other
 " were contrivances set on foot by them to de-
 " fraud the *English* of their right to the *whole* of
 " *Acadie* in its greatest extent." They added,
 " That this extraordinary measure, besides being
 " a flagrant breach of the late peace, shewed a
 " distrust on their part, that they should not be
 " able, by the strength of their evidence, to gain
 " their point, and therefore were determined to
 " secure it by foul means."

These objections, as they seemed of some
 weight, occasioned new debates: however, the
 majority carrying it, it was at last resolved to dis-
 own their first system, and raise another on a new
 foundation; namely, the above mentioned pas-
 sage of *Denys*, supported by that supposed not-to-
 be-shaken prop, the argument drawn from the
 words of the treaty, *and also Port-Royal*.

This, my friend, is the ill-grounded new sys-
 tem which our ministers have formed, in order
 to destroy the well-grounded pretensions of the
English: a system which, in the opinion of all ju-
 dicious persons here, destroys itself; and has fixed
 a stain on the character of our ministers, which
 they will never be able to wipe off.

Having thus given you a summary relation of
 the origin of their system, the great alteration
 which hath been made in the first plan, and the
 debates which past relating thereto before it was
 agreed

agreed upon; I shall, in the next place, acquaint you with the success which it hath met with, and what is likely to be the fate of it.

Our commissaries appointed to confer with those of the *English*, come to *Paris* for that purpose, acted wrong at first setting out, whether of their own heads, or by direction of the ministry, I have not learned: for, as if ashamed of the innovation in the system, or afraid to reveal it, they suffered the *English* commissaries to send to them 2 or 3 times, before they would let them know what their ideas of the *antient* limits were. This ill-timed shyness or reservedness, you may be sure, served only to add to the surprise of the *English* commissaries; and encrease the suspicion which the change of our system gave them, that our court intended no fair play.

However, the *English* commissaries, glad no doubt of the alteration, (as it furnished them with as strong a proof as they could desire of the system of ours being an imposture, and that the limits which they proposed were of their own making), drew up a *memorial*, in which they did not fail to take advantage of that innovation. It was presented on the 11th of *January* 1751 to our commissaries, who were extremely elated, when they came to see that the fatal passages of *Chamblain* were not cited by them; and complimented themselves on the judgment which they had passed on the penetration of the *English*: not considering at the same time, that the *English* commissaries might have had no occasion for citing those passages; and that, supposing the omission of them had been owing to oversight, yet their memorial was penned with a great deal of judgment and strength.

The ministers who voted for the new system were particularly severe upon the two who opposed it, and took care to let them know, "how much inferior they ought to esteem their discernment to that of the many which they opposed." The two ministers, in their turn, put *them* in mind, "that this negotiation was not yet at an end; that they might expect a reply to their memorial or answer, which might supply the defect (if it was one) of the *English* memorial; and that, in short, if those passages did not appear in such *Reply*, yet they could not be long concealed from the inquisitive eyes of some of the *English* nation, who would make the discovery; which, whenever it happened, would bring to light the imposition, and fix on the whole nation in general, as well as themselves in particular, a brand of infamy, from which the King himself would not be exempted; a consideration which, above all others, ought to make them take care of what they were a-doing."

The other ministers heard this part of the remonstrance not without some concern: but their desire to get the country of *Acadie*, so much the object of their wishes, out of the hands of the *English*, and the new hopes of success which their memorial had given them, for the reason aforesaid, made them resolve at all hazards to persist in the course they had begun. "If those passages, said they, do not come to light before limits are settled, we care not how soon they are discovered afterwards." Besides, they flattered themselves, from the patience with which the *English* had so long suffered the encroachments of our people in *North America*, particularly

ticularly in the country in question, the aversion which, ever since the treaty of *Utrecht*, they had discovered to a foreign war; and from the formidable ideas which they supposed the late conquests in *Flanders* had given them of the *French* power. From these considerations, I say, they flattered themselves that the *English* ministers would submit to any terms which they should insist on; and take their reasons for disputing their title to all *Acadie* to be substantial, were they ever so weak or frivolous. And it is to these despicable notions which they had formed to themselves of the power, as well as understanding, of the *British* nation, that the connoisseurs here ascribe the imposing manner in which the memorial of our commissaries, in answer to that of the *English*, is written.

In this memorial or answer, it is said that they have stuck at nothing which might serve their purpose; nor lost any advantage which could be obtained either by suppressing of evidence, misquoting passages from our own authors, and giving wrong translations from those of other nations; by cavilling at the most express authorities, by disputing the clearest facts, by perverting the sense of historians, and by putting forced and unnatural constructions on their words: in short, that they have been by no means sparing of false assertions, quibbles, and chicaneries.

Our ministers, like our writers, seem to have the vanity to think, that whatever they assert will be believed by all the world, without any farther proof than their bare *ipse dixit*; and that standing out positively in the wrong, will make it be taken
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for granted that they are in the right; an opinion very prevalent among children, whose actions are commonly governed by it: but then, you know, it is always ascribed to the weakness of their understandings, never to the strength of their judgment. Is the same apology, do you think, to be made for the conduct of our ministers? or is it to be ascribed to the faults of the heart, rather than of the head?

However, our ministers did not look on the above mentioned way of treating the subject in any bad light: on the contrary, they doubtless considered it as an instance of their superior skill in the method of reasoning and address in managing a controversy, by bewildering their antagonists with a multitude of quotations, and tedious reflections, which were to serve for arguments; by putting them to the proof of every thing, how clear so ever, they advanced; and by obliging them to answer a thousand matters which no way relate to the purpose: in order by that means to spin out the dispute to such a length as might take from the public an inclination to read it; as well as to puzzle their judgment, and, by such a variety of matters mixed together in very methodical confusion, render it difficult to discover, either what were the main points in question, or which party had the advantage on their side.

This memorial was delivered to the *English* commissaries on the 4th of *October* 1751; and as the year 1752 past away without their receiving an answer, they began to flatter themselves that their elaborate performance was unanswerable,
at

at least that it would not be answered ; and in that persuasion had committed it and the *English* memorial to the press, with design to publish them by way of victory and triumph. The impression was considerably advanced, when at length, on the 23d of *January* 1753, the much dreaded *Reply* came, which was to *bumble* their vanity, and *blow up* their system, according to the expressions used by many, who praise it as being written with great perspicuity and easiness of style ; with much modesty and politeness, yet force of expression ; for its method in handling matters, and strength of its arguments : in short, this *Reply* is considered here as a *chef d'œuvre*, and as having given the system of our ministers its *coup de grace*.

'Tis said their hearts failed them when they saw it, for fear their *fourberie* should be detected, although they had fortified themselves against a discovery : yet still they had hopes, founded on the reasons before mentioned. But when they came to read the *Reply*, and found that the quick-sighted writer had not only produced from *Cbamplain* the passages in question, but many others of moment on the side of his nation, which they themselves perhaps had not discovered ; great, no doubt, was their dejection and confusion, at least for a while, and more easily to be imagined than expressed : for which reason I will leave you to your own ideas to form a picture of them on the occasion.

In the midst of their perplexity the two ministers who had all along endeavoured to dissuade them from pursuing their unjust design, did not fail to indulge their spleen, by putting them in

mind, " that all which *they* had predicted was in
 " effect come to pass; that their systems were
 " demolished, by bringing one to destroy the
 " other; that their falsities, wrong citations,
 " mistranslations, perversions of passages, their
 " cavils, quibbles, evasions, and chicaneries,
 " were all exposed: in short, that their system of
 " limits was proved to be a manifest forgery,
 " contrived to defraud their neighbours of a spa-
 " cious country, which their predecessors, with
 " the consent of the King, had solemnly yielded
 " up to them, and renounced all manner of right
 " to: that they had brought themselves into ut-
 " ter disgrace, and what was worse had disho-
 " noured the nation, with the King at their head;
 " who could be only excusable on a supposition
 " that it was the sole contrivance of his mini-
 " sters, who concealed the fraud from him: that
 " his Majesty would not have suffered them to
 " proceed, if he had known how bad a founda-
 " tion they went on; and in short, that he is in-
 " capable of consenting to such an infamous
 " action."

He advised them, therefore, as the only means
 to retrieve the injury done to all parties, to drop
 their design at once, make an apology for the
 mistake, and acknowledge the pretensions of the
English to be strictly just. He added, that it
 was not too late to do all this, since the affair at
 present lay only in the breasts of the ministers of
 both nations, and was not become public. He
 added, " that a blot was no blot till it was hit;
 " and that therefore, when it should be known
 " that they submitted to the authorities found in
 " *Champlain*, as soon as they were produced to
 " them,

“ them, the world would be inclined to think
 “ they had overlooked them; and that, if they
 “ had discovered them before, they would not
 “ have proceeded in an affair which they knew
 “ to be both groundless and wrong.”

The ministers in the opposition, patiently heard
 the reproaches of their colleague without reply :
 but, being enamoured with the charms of their
 darling system, in answer to that part of his dis-
 course which advised them to drop it, they said,
 that they had proceeded too far in it to think of
 going back ; and that it would redound more to
 their disgrace to acknowledge their error than to
 persist in it. “ To own ourselves in an error,
 “ continued they, would rather induce the world
 “ to suspect, than acquit, us of the fraud ; where-
 “ as, our persisting to justify what we have done,
 “ might, at least, incline them to think that, how-
 “ ever we may be mistaken in our judgments, we
 “ did not *forge* our system, as you say, with
 “ an intention to defraud our neighbours of their
 “ property. The only way therefore to pre-
 “ serve our credit, which as yet hath not been
 “ impeached by any but the *English*, is to per-
 “ sever in support of our system ; and take the
 “ remainder of *Acadie* from them by *force*, as
 “ we have already *begun* to do, if they will not
 “ give it up to us by fair means.”

To this their antagonist replied, “ That it
 “ would never be in their power to acquit them-
 “ selves of a concerted design to defraud the
 “ *English* nation any other way than by the me-
 “ thod he proposed : that if they persisted in
 “ their attempts, their varying so enormously in
 E “ their

“ their report of the bounds would for ever
 “ fasten on them the imputation of fraud; which
 “ their seizing on two parts in three of the coun-
 “ try almost at the beginning of the conferences,
 “ by building forts on the isthmus of *Cbignière*,
 “ would confirm beyond all doubt: nor would,
 “ continued he, your taking the remainder
 “ from the *English* acquit you of the charge of
 “ defrauding them, unless you can make it ap-
 “ pear that the way to atone for one flagrant
 “ piece of injustice is to commit another.”

This expostulation of the two ministers had no
 more influence than the former on their colleagues,
 who resolved to prosecute their project, right or
 wrong; and since they found it would be in
 vain to undertake to answer the *English Reply*,
 which, in reality, is unanswerable, they deter-
 mined to be silent, and pursue other measures.
 They had already employed both fraud and force.
 Of this last the world was already sensible, and
 would, they knew, be soon made acquainted with
 the other. Since, therefore, they saw they must
 be condemned in the opinion of the world for
 what they had already acted in both those capa-
 cities; they judged they had as good go thorough
 stitch with the work, and make use of the same
 instruments to compass their design.

Having resolved therefore, without more de-
 lay, to seize the peninsula of *Acadie* by surprize,
 they gave orders at *Brest* and other ports to fit out
 ships with the utmost dispatch and secrecy, to be
 sent on that expedition. But, as they were sensible
 that an event of this nature, when it came to be
 known, would make a great noise in the world,
 and

and cause them to be condemned for breach of treaties, they resolved to distribute the *English* memorials and their own answer, without the *Reply*, at all the foreign courts of *Europe*; in order to prejudice them in their favour, and render them the more easy to receive their justification when there should be occasion for it.

In vain did the two opposing ministers remonstrate, " That they ought to have no dependence
 " on their memorial; that, with all the artifice
 " employed in drawing it up, it was far from
 " being a satisfactory answer to the memorial of
 " the *English* commissaries, or from containing any
 " thing sufficient to invalidate the strength of
 " the evidence on which their pretensions were
 " founded: that besides, their suppressing the
 " *Reply* to their answer, a circumstance which
 " could not be long unknown, would not only
 " render their cause suspicious, but would be
 " looked on by those courts where they presented
 " their memorial, as an attempt to impose on
 " them, by offering them a partial, and unfair
 " state of the controversy."

The other ministers answered, " That if their
 " memorial did not overthrow the *English* pretensions, yet, it was so contrived, by the great
 " quantity of mixed matters of different kinds,
 " and the method observed in answering the objections of the *English*, as well as in supporting
 " their own allegations; that, at least, it would
 " render their pretensions doubtful, and puzzle foreigners in whose favour to decide, which was as
 " much as they then aimed at: that, besides, as
 " their distributing the memorial was designed only

“ for a temporary expedient, to amuse the world
 “ till such time as they had gained their point ;
 “ when that was accomplished they minded not
 “ how soon the deception was discovered, nor
 “ how much the courts of *Europe* resented the
 “ imposition. They added, that *France* stood
 “ in no fear of any of her neighbours, and
 “ despised either their resentment or their re-
 “ proaches ; that it was their business, at any
 “ rate, to enlarge and aggrandize the *Gallick*
 “ empire: advantages which ought not, they
 “ said, to be lost out of any pretended scruple to
 “ violate the laws of conscience or justice ; and
 “ that, if what was necessary for the benefit of
 “ their country could not be had from those
 “ they were in peace with by fair means, it was
 “ lawful for them to make use of either strata-
 “ gem or force to compass their ends ; and this
 “ they thought sufficient to justify them in what
 “ they were then about.”

They were determined therefore to distribute
 their memorial, without the *Reply*, at the several
European courts as soon as they found it conven-
 nient. But as they knew all this precaution
 would be of no avail in case the *English* should
 print it, they found it absolutely necessary, if pos-
 sible, to prevent the same. To compass their end
 they acquainted the *English* ministers “ That they
 “ had made a considerable progress in printing
 “ the memorials of both nations : but that, as it
 “ seemed best to settle matters between the two
 “ crowns without troubling the world with their
 “ disputes ; they, on farther consideration, were
 “ willing to suppress the edition, so far as had
 “ been

" been printed, provided the *English* ministers
 " would not print the memorials."

This proposal, the *English* ministers, who suspected no deceit, agreed to; and as they had not yet committed the memorials to the press, laid the thought of it entirely aside. Ours, on the contrary, proceeded to finish their impression; and as soon as the time proper for exposing them was come, delivered them to the ministers of all the foreign courts, not forgetting even those of *Great Britain*; who, it is likely, were somewhat surprized at the unexpected present.

However, the effects which our ministers proposed from this artifice to dupe the *English*, were in a good measure frustrated by an accident which none could have thought would ever have happened. For while they waited for the proper juncture to distribute their memorial, the *English* author before-mentioned, moved it seems by the incroachments, as they are called, of our nation in *Acadie* or *Nova-Scotia*, took it in his head to write in defence of the *British* title to the *whole* of those two countries united under those different names, against the arguments advanced by father *Charlevoix*, in his *History of New France*, to prove that by the treaty of *Utrecht* they were intitled to but a small part of the provinces which they claimed. This little piece, which charges that historian with ignorance and want of moral honesty; with chicanery, prevarication, misciting authorities, and perverting the sense of passages (in the same manner as our commissaries have been charged) with corrupting the words of authors, and even of the treaty of *Utrecht*; in short, with numerous

rous falsifications, and other literary crimes, little less than forgery: this little piece, I say, appeared about two months before our ministers had distributed their memorials, and it was immediately published in *French*, both at *Paris* and the *Hague*. And as, among a great many other proofs in it, those passages of *Champlain*, so often mentioned, were produced; it, in all probability, helped to prepossess foreigners in favour of the *English* pretensions, and to prevent their being prejudiced by the memorial of our ministers till such time as the *English* edition of that memorial, accompanied with the *Reply*, was published: of which notice was given at the courts abroad, as soon as that of our ministers appeared at them.

What was still more unfortunate on the side of our ministers, who have in every thing been dupes to themselves, they kept playing fast and loose, in the proposals made by our ambassador, with those of the *English*, so long that they began to perceive it was all an amusement; and thence suspecting the design of our naval preparations, (which at last were discovered by, or to them) gave immediate orders for putting several strong fleets to sea. In this they used such diligence that, getting the start of ours, they arrived in *America* before them; attacked our fleet, took one or two of the king's ships, and prevented them from landing forces in *Acadie*, as they designed, in order to dispossess the *English* of the peninsula, to which they had before confined them.

This disaster in short overturned at once the darling project which our ministers had so much set their hearts on, and to bring which to bear, they

they had so long racked their brains, and invented so many stratagems; not scrupling, so they could but gain their point, which they deemed of the last importance, to ruin their own reputation, by breach of treaties, lose the affections as well as good opinion of their neighbours, by attempts to impose on them, and hazard the welfare of the nation by engaging it in a dangerous war. Such daring things will ministers undertake, who, more than ordinary zealous to enlarge the interest and power of their prince, stick not at any thing to compass their ends. Soon after this disappointment, or, if you will, defeat of our *American* expedition, the *English* took from us our forts on the isthmus of *Cbigniceto*; and now, encouraged by these successes, began to seize our merchant-ships at sea, and carry them into their ports, which were soon filled with them. This they did, and continue still to do, under pretence of indemnifying themselves, as well for the great expences which our ministers have put them to, by obliging them to set on foot, on this occasion, all their force both by sea and land (in which expences possibly they intend to include the large subsidies given to foreign princes for assistance) as for the damages sustained for many years past, by the incroachments and depredations committed by our countrymen of *Canada*, and their *Indians*, on the *English* colonies.

How will our ministers be able to answer the involving our nation, by their unjust projects, in so many calamities, should the *English* compel them to make the satisfaction which they demand, over and above confirming their claim with respect to *Acadié*? Better, in that case, the country had

had been sunk in the sea, or swallowed up by an earthquake, and themselves with it, than ever they should have begun such an unjust and unfortunate dispute.

This, my friend, is the secret history of the conduct of our ministers, and the methods taken by them to support and carry into execution their ill-contrived, romantic system; which being founded in injustice, they saw could only be supported by injustice: but all their artifices proving ineffectual, they find themselves and the nation immersed in great perplexity, and likely to be involved in greater calamity, unless they can extricate themselves by an unjust war, of which they ought always to dread the event; or, what is more eligible, a good accommodation, procured by doing justice to their neighbours, whom they have so highly injured and provoked.

Methinks, in every thing our ministers have acted wrong: their whole conduct seems to be a chain of obvious errors. May it not be said they have been infatuated? Was it not enough to lay a scheme to defraud the *English* of the greater part of *Acadie*, to the *whole* of which they have an undoubted right, as the *whole* was in the most express terms given up to them by the treaty of *Utrecht*? Was it not enough, I say, for our ministers to lay the scheme to defraud them of that valuable province? (Alas! to our cost we know it to be a valuable one!) But they must attempt also to impose on all *Europe* besides, by a misrepresentation, as well as suppression of evidence, which it was impossible for them long to conceal; and that only with a hope, a very uncertain

tain hope, of gaining their ends in *America*, by the conquest of the small remainder of *Acadie*, which they had not yet seized, before their collusion should come to be discovered.

I repeat it; may they not be said to have been infatuated, in pursuing such measures, which, however successful, must have terminated with infamy to our nation; and justified the common reflection of insincerity, and want of faith, which is thrown on us by our neighbours on all sides? will not the event establish through *Europe* the proverb of *Gallica fides*, already received in some countries not far distant?

The gaining of *Acadie*, it must be acknowledged, would be a point of vast importance, with respect both to our power and commerce: but supposing it was greatly more advantageous to our nation than it would be, how could our ministers think it for the interest of the *French* nation to purchase it with the sacrifice of justice, honour, and integrity; which ought of all things to be most dear to every people, who would be desirous to live in friendship and esteem with other nations?

I lament, my friend, the dishonour and disgrace which our ministers by their conduct in this unhappy dispute have brought on the whole *French* nation; a dishonour and disgrace, so flagrant in its kind, as there seems no hopes of ever retrieving it. For what court of *Europe*, to which the news of this deception hath or shall arrive, will ever treat the memorials of *France* with any degree of credit or respect? Every state,

but those who have some dependence on the *French* court, on account of subsidies, or other advantages, will for the future hold us in the utmost contempt, if not abhorrence: nor will less than a long series of upright conduct be able to recover our lost reputation, or reinstate us in the good opinion of our neighbours which we have lost.

These melancholy reflections are greatly augmented by the distracted posture of our affairs. Our ministers baffled, as well in their design of wresting *Acadie* out of the hands of the *English*, as in that of imposing on the understanding of foreign courts; are, for all the best face which they put on it, in reality in the utmost confusion, and at a loss how to act. Their whole scheme was founded on a supposed certainty of success; and as they never had the least suspicion of having their designs frustrated, they made no provision against a miscarriage which they never thought possible.

Disappointed as to their expectations abroad, and having no fleets able to withstand the *English* at home, they know not what plan of measures to pursue. They had originally but three courses to take, to attack *Flanders* and the empire by land, to invade *Great Britain* by sea, or to send a large body of forces to *America*.

With regard to the first, our ministers have the mortification to see that the glory of *France* has received a signal check; as it appears, that, after all their threatening to pour in their troops into the neighbouring countries, they find them-

selves obliged to drop that project, and turn
 their forces some other way. Have they not al-
 ready reduced the nation to such an abject degree
 of contempt, that certain little states, which here-
 tofore trembled at her slightest threats, and com-
 plied with almost every thing which we proposed
 to them; have had the courage (I might say assu-
 rance), not only to refuse answering their demand
 with respect to what part they intended to take
 in case of a war between *France* and *Great Britain*,
 but even to treat their dictatorial demand with
 marks of scorn and disrespect? Alas! how low
 has the late misconduct of our ministers brought
 the grandeur and majesty of *France*, but lately
 so highly revered! This sudden change shews
 how little the mightiest kingdoms ought to rec-
 kon on their power and strength, when not sup-
 ported by a strict adherence to justice and inte-
 grity; and how greatly a deviation from those
 virtues may diminish the authority of a prince,
 which but a little before seemed to be elevated to
 the highest pitch, and fixed on a basis not to be
 shaken. Alas! it was this which tempted our
 ministers to transgress the sacred rules of equity;
 and, what is to be lamented, our Monarch suf-
 fers for their presumption. God send our nation
 may not suffer for it also!

The second course our ministers had to take,
 was to invade *Great Britain*; and as their pro-
 posed irruption into *Flanders* has met with a stop,
 it seems to be all we have for it on this side of the
Atlantic ocean. The project also seems to be re-
 solved on. Already the troops from the interior
 parts of *France* are marched towards the coasts
 along the *Channel*, with an intent to line them

from *Brest* to *Dunkirk*; and it may be presumed, that the ministers, from what they have already acted, are capable of attempting to carry this scheme into execution. But must not you think, my friend, as well as I, that this must be a most desperate undertaking, and carry along with it the marks of a thorough *Don Quixotism*?

Let us only consider the case a little. If we make a descent, it will probably be on the nearest coasts, as it may possibly be effected in one dark night, and the convoy to the transports may retreat out of danger before the *English* are prepared to intercept their passage; which could hardly be expected in case the forces were to be landed in *Scotland*, or the more northern parts of *England*. But as they can make the descent conveniently only in some particular places, is it not to be presumed but that these places will be well guarded both by sea and land? and that, if our vessels should be discovered on their approach (as I should think they must), the *English* men of war on that station, as well as the forces on shore, would hold them in play till such time as other *English* ships would come to their assistance. In such a conjuncture, we must give all our transports for lost, besides what may be destroyed of the King's ships. Then as to the troops, supposing them all to be safely landed, to the number of 15 or 20,000 men (which are the most we can imagine could be landed at one time), what could they do against the enemy, who, we are told, have 50 or 60,000 soldiers on foot, besides militia, and what foreign troops will come to their assistance?

You'll

You'll say, that embarkation of troops will be followed by another. Not immediately, sure, unless all our transport-vessels and King's ships should return safe; and, in case they should, we could not hope to land any more at the same place of the coast, nor within a considerable space on each side, as to be sure those parts would be strongly guarded by men of war; and, if the second body of forces be landed at a considerable distance from the first, in all probability both will be defeated and destroyed before they can have an opportunity of joining each other.

I hope our ministers do not flatter themselves with the expectation that our troops will be joined by any considerable number of mal-contented. That would be, I fear, a fatal delusion. Whatever room there might have been for such a hope some years ago, care has been taken since to curb the spirit of rebellion, and restrain the assembling of disaffected persons. This is manifest in the small number of *Jacobites*, who joined P—— E—— in his late progress through great part of *England*; when the number of *English* troops then on foot to check them was but very small to what it is at present. Besides, there never was such a spirit known among the *English* as on this occasion, as if all parties were united against the designs of our ministers: so that we can have but very few, if any, friends to reckon upon; and even those few would not venture to appear, unless our troops should gain such signal and successive victories, as might give them reasonable hopes that our forces would entirely subdue the whole *British* nation.

But surely nothing can be more chimerical, than to suppose ever such an event as this should happen;

happen; as if it could be possible that all the forces which our nation should be able to land, supposing them to be 30 or 40,000, should ever be able to conquer 8 or 10 millions of courageous people like the *Eng^{ls}*. On the contrary, it is to be with good reason apprehended, that if double the number I have mentioned of troops should be landed in *England*, very few, if any, would be left alive to return to *France*; considering what a dreadful slaughter must necessarily be the consequence whenever the troops of the two nations should meet in battle; as the *French* would be animated by their natural bravery, and the *English* edged on by indignation and resentment.

'Tis said they look upon the conduct of our ministers in this affair as one of the most atrocious impositions and affronts that ever was attempted to be put on any nation; that this provocation, added to the great antipathy which they have to our nation, whom they look on as their natural enemies, has so keenly irritated them, that they will rise to a man, if requisite, to oppose an invasion: and many of the most sanguine sort have, on this occasion, been heard to say, that they could wish a million of *Franc^{men}* would come over, that they might have the pleasure to revenge their quarrel by destroying them all. So heinously, it seems, they in general take this affair, stigmatising us with the epithets of *perfidious*, *treacherous*, *fraudulent*, *deceitful*, *circumventing*, *audacious*, and the like; not considering, that whatever injury may be done them, it is the act of our ministers, not of our people, who are, for the general, dissatisfied with the measures they are taking.

The

The third course therefore, namely, the sending troops to *North America*, to oppose the *English* in that part of the world, seems to be the most rational and promising of success of the three. And indeed it is with a view to disguise such a design, that, in the opinion of many, our troops have been ordered to march towards the coasts before mentioned.

If this be their intention, our ministers are doubtless pursuing a right measure: for, notwithstanding the *English* ministers have hitherto acted with uncommon secrecy and circumspection, as well as penetrated beyond what might have been expected from them, into the designs and schemes of ours; yet there is a probability that their attention may be so much taken up with preventing the supposed invasion from the *French* coasts, that they will neglect the no less important affair of their colonies, and give us an opportunity of transporting a sufficient number of forces to *America*.

Besides, while the *English* are so divided there, slow in their operations, and in no small confusion for want of union, as well as good regulation, if we can but slip men thither from time to time, we may be able to stand our ground, and out-out abundance of troublesome work for them. Add to, for want of sufficient forces from *Great Britain*, and sending a large sum of money over to raise forces out of the colonies, they have done but little against us: nor will they ever be able to do us much mischief, so long as they are so ill prepared, and do things by halves. But, should once the thought come into
their

their heads, to muster all the strength of the northern provinces; and, in conjunction with some *European* troops, attack *Quebeck*; they would put an end to the quarrel there at once, and secure themselves for ever after from being annoyed, either by our people or the *Indians*, who would by that means become their friends and allies. Till this is done, we have not much to apprehend from them: but it is our good fortune, that the *English* often overlook the most obvious advantages, and do not always shoot at the right mark. I have been positively assured, that they might very easily have driven us beyond the river *St. Laurence* the first campaign, if they had taken proper measures: whereas now we are stronger than ever we were to the south of that river in all parts, excepting in *Nova Scotia*, which we so unhappily lost, and I fear irrecoverably: I won't say, however, by any neglect or misconduct on our side, except in the breach of peace.

By all means, therefore, the attention of our ministers should be continually turned towards *America*; which, after all, is the proper place for carrying on the war: for it is evident that we shall get nothing by confining it to *Europe*, farther than in making reprisals on the *English* shipping, by our privateers and the king's ships. But then, the *English* have got so far a-head of us in that article, and seized so great a number of our merchant-men, that we shall hardly ever be able to come up with them. Nay, at the rate they go on, backed with such formidable fleets, they seem determined not to leave us any, as well as to destroy all the king's ships, if they can come at them: but, the Holy Virgin be thanked, we have

have strong ports for their security; and yet, unless they put to sea, what will become of our trade?

This has indeed been attributed to our king's lenity: but was in reality owing to the consternation which that unexpected, but well-judged proceeding of the *English*, threw our ministers into, and the distractions which in consequence divided their councils, not knowing what method to resolve on, some advising one thing, some another, and scarce two agreeing in the same sentiments. Mean time our merchants knew not what construction to put on their delay in coming to a resolution. It was rumoured, that some who were most forward for pushing the system of *antient* limits, were seized with timidity, infused into them by the resolute behaviour of the *English*; who till then, they imagined, durst not resent even worse injuries than those they had done the: that others were seized with a fit of remorse, for having given into a dishonourable scheme to defraud them of a country which had been so formally yielded to them; while some were for making up matters with the *English*, and granting their demands. Not only, as they had reason to believe by their resolute behaviour, that they would not suffer themselves to be imposed on; but also from a sense that it was not in the power of our nation to support the system of our ministers even if it was just; and that their miscarrying in their attempt would bring no less dishonour on the nation than the fraudulent contrivance itself.

In fine, some went so far as to say, that an accommodation with the *English* was actually agreed

on by our ministers; and that they suffered them to take our shipping, in order to indemnify themselves for the expences we had put them to by our incroachments in *America* on the *British* territories, in consequence of that iniquitous system.

If this was really the design of our ministers, in suffering those captures to be made, I cannot but think it was as iniquitous as their system; and that they have treated our nation no less injuriously than they have done the *English*: although that is nothing to be wondered at in *French* ministers, by whom we have been reduced to the state of slavery, in which we are now involved; and from whom, consequently, we can never expect any good merely for our own sakes.

Prejudiced people, and those of small reflection, are mightily incensed against the *English* for seizing our ships. They judge, from what the nation suffers, without considering the provocations we have given them for a long course of years. We not only took all opportunities of encroaching on their territories, and building forts, as they complain, on their frontiers, but in the very time that a negociation was on foot for settling the limits of *Acadie*, our people not having patience to wait for the determination, seized on all the northern part on the continent, to the south of *St. Laurence* River; and built forts on the isthmus of *Chignecto* and at *St. John's* River, before the conferences were well begun. As if our ministers (without whose orders or consent, to be sure, it could not be done) were determined, as the *English* complain, to keep the country,
right

right or wrong, and even though the dispute should be decided against them.

This step, indeed, seemed to shew a consciousness that they were in the wrong, and that the point would be decided against them, as in effect it is. It was, besides, a notorious infraction of the peace and insult on the *English* nation, who yet submitted to all this, till they were waked out of their lethargy by our troops invading the *Ohio* country, and building forts, first on the south-east side of the Lake *Erie*, then on the *Ohio* itself; after taking that of the *English*, and driving them back over the *Apalachian* (or *Alligany*) mountains into *Virginia*.

The *English*, alarmed at these hostilities, and at the preparations which our ministers were making at *Brest* and other ports, for supporting them, as well as to put *Canada* and our other *American* possessions, in a good state of defence; or, as they give out, to conquer by surprize the peninsula of *Acadié*, which remained in their hands: the *English*, alarmed, I say, at length by these proceedings, and more still by our ministers at foreign courts menacing an invasion, began to concert measures, not only to avert the dangers which threatened them; but also to indemnify themselves for the losses and damages which they alledged to have sustained by our incroachments. They began to put the last of those two resolutions in execution, by taking our shipping, without declaring war or giving us any warning; and by the rapidity of their seizures, have gone a great way already to ruin our foreign trade. How can it be thought that God would assist the hereicks, so visibly as he has done in all their undertakings on

this occasion, against those who profess the holy catholic, and only true religion, if they were not in the right, and we in the wrong?

The merchants who have been sufferers by those captures; and they who have been prejudiced by their clamours, call them *pyracies* and *sea-robberies*. The *English*, in this point, have exceeded us in politeness, as they only stiled our seizures in *Nova-Scotia* and other parts of *North America*, encroachments or depredations. What I am most concerned, and surprized at, is that our ministers have adopted those vulgar terms; and made use of them, as well in their late demand at the court of *London*, as in their declarations at those of the other states of *Europe*: because it seems to discover vexation more than resentment; and is like shewing their teeth when they cannot bite. In reality, the slight coolness of the answer returned by the *English* minister, shews that they took it in the same light. However, it must be confessed that the only chance they have to bring them to a compliance, is to bully them into it, as often hitherto ours have done. How happy would it be for us if we had some of their former ministers to deal with!

The more sober and considerate people, however, among us take these proceedings of the *English* in a different view: and from what I have already said upon the subject, I may conclude you reckon me one of that number. They say they cannot blame the *English*: that the first hostilities, breach of peace, and depredations were committed by the *French* in *America*, as hath been already specified; and that therefore they had an undoubted

undoubted right to make reprisals, as well as to prevent a descent; by depriving *France* of the means of affecting one. But there are many at *Paris* who will not hear of any right our neighbours have to call us to an account, although, they are ready to allow, we gave them some provocations in *America*: as if our nation had a privilege to injure any other, at least, the *English*, with impunity.

As to the charge that the *English* were the first aggressors, by the seizure of ships within the *European* seas; it is a doubtful case, which will be very difficult to decide, as there was a capture likewise on our part, at or near the same time; the discussion of which must depend on the evidence of a date, which each party may be apt to strain in their own favour. Besides, from the action being committed by each party unknown to the other, it is manifest that both were equally determined to commit hostilities, or, if you will, break the peace on this side of the ocean; and therefore the nation which gave the first blow may not be said to be the aggressor more than the other. For any thing that appears yet to the contrary, the several courts of *Europe* consider the thing in this light, independent of the said *menace*. But supposing, at worst, that the *English* were the first aggressors in *Europe*, yet they know the consequence of such a proceeding; and if they thought fit to run the hazard of it, I do not see, for the reasons aforesaid, that they are to be blamed. For my part, I must own, I join in opinion with those who judge favourably of their conduct, and think that hitherto they have done nothing but what,

in the eyes of all impartial lookers-on, they may be able to justify both by the laws of reason and nations. I wish our ministers could justify their conduct half so well, or had taken their measures half so judiciously. Considering the conduct of our neighbours under former administrations, every body here is surprized at their resolution, firmness, wisdom, and, above all, their profound secrecy, in this. Every thing seems to be carried on in a series of prudent measures, which they change for the better wherever any thing falls amiss: they apply remedies as soon as ever a defect appears in their plan of operations: officers and governors are removed on the least misbehaviour: they steadily pursue the several points they have in view: the whole goes on easily, as in a regular piece of clock-work; and nothing transpires of their designs till they come to be put in execution. Such conduct must command success; and is like that which prevailed when *England* was attacked by the *invincible armada* of *Spain*. Can we hope that our fleet shall have better fortune?

Whence can this strange alteration in *British* councils proceed? Is it owing to the superior capacity and integrity of the present set of ministers who are placed at the helm? A great deal, no doubt, is to be ascribed to those happy incidents: but there is another advantage on the side of the *English* on this occasion, which contributes greatly to this felicitous situation of their affairs; an advantage which I could from my soul wish was on my country's side, and that is, the uprightness of the intentions of the *English* court, and the manifest justice of their cause.

From

From this spring flows all the advantages which they at present seem to be in full possession of, among which, are to be accounted as chief; a formidable alliance abroad, and unanimity at home, invigorated by the presence of a warlike king and dauntless prince; as well as with a resolute spirit in the people, the like of which, it is said, hath hardly ever appeared in the nation before.

It is very evident, that the laws of nature and society are naturally calculated to favour and support the cause of justice, independently of the interposition of providence: but when both seem to unite against us, may I not well say, that our ministers are *tempting the wrath of Heaven*, as well as of the *Earth* against them? And being left to ourselves, unassisted either by God or our neighbours, is it possible our ministers can expect a happy issue of their projects? Ought they not rather to fear that they will bring down greater evils upon us? And if they still obstinately persist in their unjust measures, will they not give the world too much room to believe, that they think providence hath no part in the government of mundane affairs; and that, in short, it is tied to the longest sword and the largest cannon?

Our court ought not to flatter itself with the hopes of bringing the *English* to lower their terms of accommodation. Their ministers seem to have taken particular care to provide against that necessity, by the great preparations and alliances which they have made. They are doubtless determined at least to have every inch secured to them

them which they may be intitled to by the treaty of *Utrecht*, confirmed by that of *Aix la Chappelle*, before they enter into any treaty. This appears from their *remarks* on the demands of our court ; and if this was not their fixed resolution, can it be supposed that they would put themselves to such an immense expence ? Can it be imagined that the vast sums of money bestowed on subsidies on this occasion, are designed to enrich foreigners to the impoverishing themselves ? or to procure, by giving up any of what they hold to be their just pretensions, a peace which they might have had at first by the same means, without loading themselves with such intolerable burthens ? No, it can never be thought that so many millions as it must cost them are designed to be thrown away.

They have experienced the ill effects of such temporary expedients, which, to save a little more expences, after being at a vast deal, have left things unsettled, as they were before, without remedying the inconveniencies. By this ill-advised parsimony, every peace made by former ministers had only served as a truce ; not to terminate the war, but to put off the evil for a time. This pernicious practice has put the nation to infinitely greater charges than if they had been at all the expence at once which it would have cost them to put their affairs on a good, as well as stable footing.

For this reason it hath been the policy of our court, which is sensible of the advantage, to act in such a manner as to oblige the *English* to expend their riches in procuring alliances ; and even
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to make war from time to time, to oblige them to expend them the faster. It is true, this policy puts the king to a vast expence of treasure; but then it exhausts the finances of the *English* infinitely more. By this means we have brought them to such a pass, that in a few years they must have been forced to give up to our king, not only all which they have put themselves to such infinite charges to save, but also themselves into the bargain; and be reduced to submit to the power of *France*, without the expence perhaps of either blood or treasure. Seeing therefore that they can have no lasting peace otherwise, they seem determined to make one effectual effort, by exerting all their strength, let it cost what it will, to procure the terms which they in justice expect.

Thus, by one extraordinary expence they propose to avoid continual extraordinary expences; and for the future to save the millions laid out in subsidies. These, draining the nation of its wealth, and requiring more than it could spare, has involved it fourscore millions in debt, *English* money; which amount to more than 1600 millions in ours. A most prodigious sum! almost beyond a *Frenchman's* conception or belief.

It was thought by our ministers, at the treaty of *Aix la Chapelle*, the *English* were exhausted to such a degree that another war would go near to do their business. This, then, is the critical war, if it should come to that, by which, according as their ministers manage it, our neighbours are to stand or fall. If they clap up a peace, as at other times, and leave things unsettled, they must inevitably be ruined, by re-

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turning to their old pernicious system of making peace to go to war again: but if they persevere with firmness in the course they have begun, they must infallibly gain their ends at present; and, by the means already mentioned, be able hereafter to defend themselves against all the world, without calling any foreigners to their assistance. The war thus managed, however expensive, instead of ruining them, will set their affairs on a secure foundation; and bring them out of debt by means of the immense savings which will put it in their power to discharge them.

I am afraid, therefore, that our ministers will have reason to repent this attempt to force *Acadie* out of the hands of the *English*; and that it will appear in the end to be a very unfortunate quarrel to *France*. It is apparent already, that we have brought them acquainted with their own strength, and that henceforward they will depend wholly on themselves: for such a surprizing change of measures, supported by so much resolution and good conduct, as hath not been known in *British* ministers ever since the peace of *Utrecht*, seems to indicate, that, as soon as the storm is blown over, they intend to train their militia, and remove the pretence for subsidies. If it turn out otherwise, and the old measures should take place again, our nation will have as fair a chance as they had before; and, by only pursuing their former practice, of keeping them in apprehensions of our power, so as to induce them to continue paying subsidies, we shall in a few years more be sure of our prey.

If the *English*, thus taught by our ministers, should baffle all their designs; if that nation, which before would never venture to face ours, without being assisted by numerous allies, should now, unassisted, and alone, not only enter the lists with us, but defeat all our attempts against them, both by sea and land, what a dreadful disgrace would it bring upon the *French* nation, so long held to be almost invincible? In what contempt would it subject our power, which could no longer be looked on as formidable? Had not therefore our ministers better allow them their just demands, than to risk the loss of the nation's fame, and our Grand Monarch's glory, by endeavouring to establish their already exploded, as well as unjust and ill-contrived, system?

We are disputing with the *English* the possession of the lands along the *Obio*, as well as *Acadié*; two countries of the utmost importance to them for securing their colonies. To speak impartially, they cannot part with the first, without exposing their middle colonies to be invaded by our troops, or the *Indians* in our interest; nor can they let us have *Acadié*, without endangering their northern colonies, by suffering us to enclose them on that side; and yielding a vast tract of coast, furnished with the best ports in all *North America*, from whence we might at pleasure disturb the peace and commerce of all their plantations.

What an absurdity, then, must it be in the author of the *Summary Discussion*, to imagine that the *English*, after refusing at any rate to suffer the least reduction in the bounds of *Acadié*, would yet

give up to our King *St. John's River*. This would in effect be giving up the whole, under another name; and parting with provinces after being at infinite charges to avoid it.

We ought to content ourselves with the possession of *Canada* and *Louisiana*; and could our people contain themselves within proper bounds, I believe the *English* would live in good neighbourhood with them, and never think of taking either from them. This I have reason to believe; because they have made no attempts that way within our memories, and have even suffered our people to encroach much upon them. But I know not what a pacific, indolent people, roused out of their supine indolence, and too far provoked, may do. By setting up unjust claims to their territories, aggravated by attempts, both of collusion and force, to wrest them out of their hands; we may provoke them, as first discoverers of *North America*, to set up a title to both *Canada* and *Louisiana*, and take them from us: as they might easily do, were their colonies united, or would only exert part of their strength. Should this evil befall us, as I fear at length it may, it will be entirely owing to the perverseness of our ministers; who are doing all they can to force a listless people to action, whether they will or not, by pushing impositions beyond all bounds. So that, after all, the *English* may have reason to say, *the French are their best friends*.

Nothing could happen more unluckily than a war at this time, when *France* is so much divided within itself; and almost ready to break out in civil wars, between the clergy and the parliaments.

What

What advantages might not be taken by our neighbours on every side, to strip us of all which we have from time to time wrested from them; and who knows what they may attempt, should our design against *Great Britain* miscarry with considerable loss? This posture which our affairs are in, both at home and abroad, is certainly not agreeable to the wishes of our ministers; for although they put the best face upon it, their being at a loss how to act appears in all our measures, and perplexity in our councils. There is a despondency also, and a dissatisfaction, visible among them; which never fails to shew itself when the designs which the ministers of any nation have in hand are not strictly justifiable. This always creates a fear and diffidence, heightened by a consciousness of guilt in the action, which distracts their judgments, and often throws them upon wrong measures. I wish the nation may come off without loss or disgrace; but I dare not wish our ministers success. Religion, my dear friend, will not suffer me; lest, in wishing prosperity to a cause which to me appears highly unjust, I should do wrong to my neighbour, and offend God.

Things however are come to such a pass, that a very little time must determine the dispute about the *antient* limits of *Acadié*, either by the sword, which sometimes hews down justice; or else by what is much more to be wished, an equitable accommodation, such as may give content to both nations, and restore lasting harmony, as well as peace, once more between them. But this must be brought about forth with before our commerce be quite ruined, otherwise it will be of no use.

This

This is a happiness which every lover of his country must ardently desire. But what hope is there, that our ministers, who have acted so perversely hitherto, will give ear to reason, till they see our commerce utterly ruined, and our fleets destroyed?

There is no redress, therefore, of our affairs to be expected from them. To whom, then, shall we turn our eyes for relief? There is only one resource in our calamity, and that is the King. His Majesty perceiving the commerce of his subjects likely to be ruined, and his ships taken by the *English*, like a tender father, careful to protect his family, and procure satisfaction for the injuries done to them, prepares to revenge their quarrel and his own. But then he believes the *English* to be in the wrong, because his ministers tell him so; and he gives credit to what his ministers tell him, because he believes they would not dare to deceive him in an affair of such great importance. Mean while the mystery of our ministers system is industriously concealed from his royal ears. It is a secret which they know ought never to be revealed to him; as they are sensible, that, instead of receiving the least countenance from him, they would incur his highest displeasure, for criminally leading him, by false information, to commit an error which might sully the glory of his reign; and bring numerous calamities on his dominions, as well as his subjects, which he sees already impending, with no small anxiety, as he imagines his cause is the cause of truth, not of falsehood.

Was

Was but *Louis the Well-beloved* made acquainted with the unjust part which his ministers have acted, and have seduced him so long to espouse, his upright soul would instantly vindicate his own honour and probity, by putting a stop at once to their proceedings. He would not suffer them to carry their enterprise into execution, even though he was sure it would be attended with success. With a heart full of integrity, he scorns to be a gainer by doing injustice ; much less is he capable of forming a scheme to deprive any of his neighbours of their just possessions, either by fraud or force.

If therefore some faithful minister, or one of the two before mentioned, would impart to his Majesty how little foundation there is for the system, to support which his ministers are going to engage him in an unjust and bloody war ; it is to be presumed that he would not only confirm the pretensions of the *English* to *Nova Scotia* or *Acadie*, claimed under the treaty of *Utrecht*, as well as other lands in dispute ; but also make them full satisfaction for the wrongs done them by his ministers without his privity ; and by that means dissipate the tempest which having been raised by them, has already raged, to the exceeding great detriment of his subjects, and threatens yet greater mischiefs to his dominions.

A representation of this nature would gain lasting reputation to the minister who should make it, and retrieve the honour of the *French* nation, already greatly sunk by the mal-conduct of the other ministers ; as well as procure more
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real glory to our Grand Monarch, than could be acquired by a successful war.

This is all, and yet too much, my dear friend, which I have to say upon the occasion. Whatever further occurs of moment, I shall not fail to communicate it to you. In the interim, I have the honour to be, &c.

PARIS, Feb. 6, 1756.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

Pag. 5. l. 22. for *as* read *than* at.

Pag. 6. l. 11. for *forced* read *dragged*.

